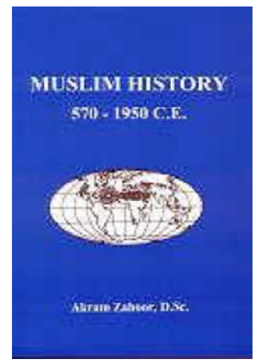
THE AMAZING Quran

Dr. Gary Miller

Calling the Quran amazing is not something done only by Muslims, who have an appreciation for the book and who are pleased with it; it has been labeled amazing by non-Muslims as well. In fact, even people who hate Islam very much have still called it amazing.



Introduction

One thing which surprises non-Muslims who are examining the book very closely is that the **Quran** does not appear to them to be what they expected. What they assume is that they have an old book which came fourteen centuries ago from the Arabian desert; and they expect that the book should look something like that - **an old book** from the desert. And then they find out that it does not resemble what they expected at all. Additionally, one of the first things that some people assume is that because it is an old book which comes from the desert, it should talk about the desert. Well the Quran does talk about the desert - some of its imagery describes the desert; but it also talks about the sea - what it's like to be in a storm on the sea.

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Merchant Marine

Some years ago, the story came to us in Toronto about a man who was in the **merchant marine** and made his living on the sea. A Muslim gave him a translation of the Quran to read. The merchant marine knew nothing about the history of Islam but was interested in reading the Quran. When he finished reading it, he brought it back to the Muslim and asked, "This Muhammad, was he a sailor?" He was impressed at how accurately the Quran describes a storm on a sea. When he was told, "No as a matter of fact, Muhammad lived in the desert," that was enough for him. He embraced Islam on the spot.

He was so impressed with the Quran's description because he had been in a storm on the sea, and he knew that whoever had written that description had also been in a storm on the sea. The description of "a wave, over it a wave, over it clouds" (Surah Nur, 24:40) was not what someone imagining a storm on a sea to be like would have written; rather, it was written by someone who knew what a storm on the sea was like. This is one example of how the Quran is not tied to certain place and time. Certainly, the scientific ideas expressed in it also do not seem to originate from the desert fourteen centuries ago.

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The Smallest Thing

Many centuries before the onset of Muhammad's prophethood, there was a well-known *theory of atomism* advanced by the Greek philosopher, Democritus. He and the people who came after him assumed that matter consists of tiny, indestructible, indivisible particles called atoms. The Arabs too, used to deal in the same concept; in fact, the Arabic word *dharrah* commonly referred to the smallest particle known to man. Now, modern science has

discovered that this smallest unit of matter (i.e., the atom, which has all of the same properties as its element) can be split into its component parts. This is a new idea, a development of the last century; yet; interestingly enough, this information had already been documented in the Quran (Surah Saba', 34:3) which states:

> **"He [i.e., Allah] is aware of an atom's weight in the heavens and on the earth and even anything smaller than that..."**

Undoubtedly, fourteen centuries ago that statement would have looked unusual, even to an Arab. For him, the *dharrah* was the smallest thing there was. Indeed, this is proof, that the Quran is not outdated.

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Honey

Another example of what one might expect to find in an "old book" that touches upon the subject of health or medicine is outdated remedies or cures. Various historical sources state that the Prophet (s) gave some advice about health and hygiene, yet most of these pieces of advice are not contained in the Quran. At first glance, to the non-Muslims this appears to be a negligent omission. They cannot understand why Allah would not "include" such helpful information in the Quran. Some Muslims attempt to explain this absence with the following argument: "Although the Prophet's advice was sound and applicable to the time in which he lived, Allah, in His infinite wisdom, knew that there would come later medical and scientific advances which would make the Prophet's advice appear outdated. When later discoveries occurred, people might say that such information contradicted that which the Prophet (s) had given. Thus, since Allah would never allow any opportunity for the non-Muslims to claim that the Quran contradicts itself or the teachings of the Prophet (s), He only included in the Quran information and examples which could stand the test of time." However, when one examines the true realities of the Quran in terms of its existence as a divine revelation, the entire matter is quickly brought into its proper perspective, and the error in such argumentation becomes clear and understandable.

It must be understood that the Quran is a divine revelation, and as such, all information in it is of divine origin. Allah revealed the Quran from Himself. It is the words of Allah, which existed before creation, and thus nothing can be added, subtracted or altered. In essence, the Quran existed and was complete before the creation of Prophet Muhammad (s), so it could not possibly contain any of the Prophet's own words or advice. An inclusion of such information would clearly contradict the purpose for which the Quran exists, compromise its authority and render it inauthentic as a divine revelation.

Consequently, there was no "home remedies" in the Quran which one could claim to be outdated; nor does it contain any man's view about what is beneficial to health, what food is

best to eat, or what will cure this or that disease. In fact, the Quran only mentions one item dealing with medical treatment, and it is not in dispute by anyone. It states that in **honey** there is healing. And certainly, I do not think that there is anyone who will argue with that!

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Prophet Muhammad (s) and the Quran

If one assumes that the Quran is the product of a man's mind, then one would expect it to reflect some of what was going on in the mind of the man who "composed" it. In fact, certain encyclopedias and various books claim that the Quran was the product of hallucinations that Muhammad underwent. If these claims are true - if it indeed originated from some psychological problems in Muhammad's mind - then evidence of this would be apparent in the Quran. Is there such evidence? In order to determine whether or not there is, one must first identify what things would have been going on in his mind at that time and then search for these thoughts and reflections in the Quran.

It is common knowledge that Muhammad (s) had a very difficult life. All of his daughters died before him except one, and he had a wife of several years who was very dear and important to him, who not only proceeded him in death but died at a very critical period of his life. As a matter of fact, she must have been quite a woman because when the first revelation came to him, he ran home to her, afraid. Certainly, even today one would have a hard time trying to find an Arab who would tell you, "I was so afraid that I ran home to my wife." They just aren't that way. Yet Muhammad (s) felt comfortable enough with his wife to be able to do that. That's how influential and strong woman she was. Although these examples are only a few of the subjects that would have been on Muhammad's mind, they are sufficient in intensity to prove my point.

The Quran does not mention any of these things - not the death of his children, not the death of his beloved companion and wife, not his fear of the initial revelations, which he so beautifully shared with his wife - nothing; yet these topics must have hurt him, bothered him, and caused him pain and grief during periods of his life. Indeed, if the Quran was a product of his psychological reflections, then these subjects, as well as others, would be prevalent or at least mentioned throughout.

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Scientific Approach to the Quran

A truly scientific approach to the Quran is possible because the Quran offers something that is not offered by other religious scriptures, in particular, and other religions, in general. It is what scientists demand. Today there are many people who have ideas and theories about how the universe works. These people are all over the place, but the scientific community does not even bother to listen to them. This is because within the last century the scientific community

even bother to listen to them. This is because within the last century the scientific community has demanded a *test of falsification*. They say, "If you have theory, do not bother us with it unless you bring with that theory a way for us to prove whether you are wrong or not."

Such a test was exactly why the scientific community listened to Einstein towards the beginning of the century. He came with a new theory and said, "I believe the universe works like this; and here are three ways to prove whether I am wrong!" So the scientific community subjected his theory to the tests, and within six years it passed all three. Of course, this does not prove that he was great, but it proves that he deserved to be listened to because he said, "This is my idea; and if you want to try to prove me wrong, do this or try that."

This is exactly what the Quran has - *falsification tests*. Some are old (in that they have already been proven true), and some still exist today. Basically it states, "If this book is not what it claims to be, then all you have to do is this or this or this to prove that it is false." Of course, in 1400 years no one has been able to do "This or this or this," and thus it is still considered true and authentic.

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Falsification Test

I suggest to you that the next time you get into dispute with someone about Islam and he claims that he has the truth and that you are in darkness, you leave all other arguments at first and make this suggestion. Ask him, "Is there any falsification test in your religion? Is there anything in your religion that would prove you are wrong if I could prove to you that it exists - *anything*?" Well, I can promise right now that people will not have anything - no test, no proof, nothing! This is because they do not carry around the idea that they should not only present what they believe but should also offer others a chance to prove they're wrong. However, Islam does that.

A perfect example of how Islam provides man with a chance to verify it authenticity and "prove it wrong" occurs in the 4th chapter. And quiet honestly, I was very surprised when I first discovered this challenge. It states (Surah An-Nisa, 4:82):

> **"Do they not consider the Quran? Had it been from any other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy."**

This is a clear challenge to the non-Muslim. Basically, it invites him to find a mistake. As a matter of fact, the seriousness and difficulty of the challenge aside, the actual presentation of such a challenge in the first place is not even in human nature and is inconsistent with man's personality. One doesn't take an exam in school and after finishing the exam, write a note to the instructor at the end saying, "This exam is perfect. There are no mistakes in it. Find one if you can!" One just doesn't do that. The teacher would not sleep until he found a mistake! And yet this is the way the Quran approaches people.

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Ask Those Who Have Knowledge

Another interesting attitude that exists in the Quran repeatedly deals with its advice to the reader. The Quran informs the reader about different facts and then gives the advice: "If you want to know more about this or that, or if you doubt what is said, then you should ask those who have knowledge." This too is a surprising attitude. It is not usual to have a book that comes from someone without training in geography, botany, biology, etc., who discusses these subjects and then advises the reader to ask men of knowledge if he doubts anything. Yet in every age there have been Muslims who have followed the advice of the Quran and made surprising discoveries. If one looks to the works of **Muslim scientists** of many centuries ago, one will find them full of quotations from the Quran. These works state that they did research in such a place, looking for something. And they affirm that the reason they looked in such and such a place was that the Quran pointed them in that direction.

For example, the Quran mentions **man's origin** and then tells the reader, "Research it!" It gives the reader a hint where to look and then states that one should find out more about it. This is the kind of thing that Muslims today largely seem to overlook - but not always, as illustrated in the following example.

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Embryology

A few years ago, a group of men in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia collected all of the verses in the Quran which discuss *embryology* - the growth of the human being in the womb. They said, "Here is what the Quran says. Is it the truth?" In essence, they took the advice of the Quran: "Ask the men who know." They chose, as it happened, a non-Muslim who is a professor of embryology at the University of Toronto. His name is Keith Moore, and he is the author of textbooks on embryology - a world expert on the subject. They invited him to Riyadh and said, "This is what the Quran says about your subject. Is it true? What can you tell us?"

While he was in Riyadh, they gave him all the help that he needed in translation and all of the cooperation for which he asked. And he was so surprised at what he found that he changed his textbooks. In fact, in the second edition of one of his books, called *Before We Are Born*... in the section about the history of embryology, he included some material that was not in the first edition because of what he found in the Quran was ahead of its time and that those who believe in the Quran know what other people do not know.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Keith Moore for a television presentation, and we talked a great deal about this - it was illustrated by slides and so on. He mentioned that some of the

things that the Quran states about the growth of the human being were not known until thirty years ago. In fact, he said that one item in particular - the Quran's description of the human being as a "leech-like clot" (*'alaqah*) at one stage (Surahs al-Hajj 22:5; al-Mu'minun 23:14; and Ghafir 40:67) - was new to him; but when he checked on it, he found that it was true, and so he added it to his book. He said, "I never thought of that before," and he went to the zoology department and asked for a picture of a leech. When he found that it looked just like the human embryo, he decided to include both pictures in one of his textbooks.

Although the aforementioned example of man researching information contained in the Quran deals with a non-Muslim, it is still valid because he is one of those who is knowledgeable in the subject being researched. Had some layman claimed that what the Quran says about embryology is true, then one would not necessarily have to accept his word. However, because of the high position, respect, and esteem man gives scholars, one naturally assumes that if they research a subject and arrive at a conclusion based on that research, then the conclusion is valid.

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Skeptic's Reaction

Dr. Moore also wrote a book on *clinical embryology*, and when he presented this information in Toronto, it caused quite a stir throughout Canada. It was on the front pages of some of the newspapers across Canada, and some of the headlines were quite funny. For instance, one headline read: "SURPRISING THING FOUND IN ANCIENT PRAYER BOOK!" It seems obvious from this example that people do not clearly understand what it is all about. As a matter of fact, one newspaper reporter asked Professor Moore, "Don't you think that maybe the Arabs might have known about these things - the description of the embryo, its appearance and how it changes and grows? Maybe they were not scientists, maybe they did some crude dissections on their own - carved up people and examined these things." The professor immediately pointed out to him that he [i.e., the reporter] had missed a very important point - all of the slides of the embryo that had been shown and that had been projected in the film had come from pictures taken through a microscope. He said, "It does not matter if someone *had* tried to discover embryology fourteen centuries ago. They could not have seen it!"

All of the descriptions in the Quran of the appearance of the embryo are of the item when it is still too small to see with the eye; therefore, one needs a microscope to see it. Since such a device had only been around for little more than two hundred years, Dr. Moore taunted, "Maybe fourteen centuries ago someone secretly had a microscope and did this research, making no mistakes anywhere. Then he somehow taught Muhammad (s) and convinced him to put this information in his book. Then he destroyed his equipment and kept it a secret forever. Do you believe that? You really should not unless you bring some proof because it is such a ridiculous theory." In fact, when he was asked, "How do you explain this information in the Quran?" Dr. Moore's reply was, "It could only have been divinely revealed!"

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Geology

One of Professor Moore's colleagues, Marshall Johnson, deals extensively with *geology* at the University of Toronto. He became very interested in the fact that the Quran's statements about embryology are accurate, and so he asked Muslims to collect everything contained in the Quran which deals with his speciality. Again people were very surprised at the findings. Since there are a vast number subjects discussed in the Quran, it would certainly require a large amount of time to exhaust each subject. It suffices for the purpose of this discussion to state that the Quran makes very clear and concise statements about various subjects while simultaneously advising the reader to verify the authenticity of these statements with research by scholars in those subjects. And as illustrated by the previous examples of embryology and geology, the Quran has clearly emerged authentic. [**Quran and Scientific Knowledge**]

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You Did Not Know This Before!

Undoubtedly, there is an attitude in the Quran which is not found anywhere else. It is interesting how when the Quran provides information, it often tells the reader, "You did not know this before." Indeed, there is no scripture that exists which makes that claim. All of the other ancient writings and scriptures that people have do give a lot of information, but they always state where the information came from.

For example, when the **Bible** discusses ancient history, it states that this king lived here, this one fought in a certain battle, another one had so may sons, etc. Yet it always stipulates that if you want more information, then you should read the book of so and so because that is where the information came from. In contrast to this concept, the Quran provides the reader with information and states that this information is something new. Of course, there always exists the advice to research the information provided and verify its authenticity. It is interesting that such a concept was never challenged by non-Muslims fourteen centuries ago. Indeed, the Makkans who hated the Muslims, and time and time again they heard such revelations claiming to bring new information; yet, they never spoke up and said, "This is not new. We know where Muhammad got this information. We learned this at school." They could never challenge its authenticity because it *really* was new!

In concurrence with the advice given in the Quran to research information (even if it is new), when **'Umar** was caliph, he chose a group of men and sent them to find the **wall of Dhul-Qarnayn**. Before the Quranic revelation, the Arabs had never heard of such a wall, but because the Quran described it, they were able to discover it. As a matter of fact, it is now located in what is called Durbend in the Soviet Union.

[Note: The city of Derbend (Durbend, Derbent, Derband) is located in Daghestan on the West coast of the Caspian sea, about 150 miles south-east of Grozny, Chechnia and about 140 miles north north-west of Baku,

Azerbaijan. Derband was also known as Bab al-Abwab in early Muslim history. Al-Tabari mentions it in his famous work 'Tarikh al-rusul wa'l Muluk' when discussing the events of 14 A.H. (646 C.E.), during the reign of the second rightly guided Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra). The city is also mentioned by Yaqut in Mu'jam al-Buldan. It had fortifications meant to repel invasions from the north of Caucasus, and where once powerful Kingdom of Khazar ruled. The history of Khazars has been well documented since the middle of the first millennium C.E., and their kingdom disintegrated in 966 C.E. Derbend was used as the main point of entry from the north of Caucasus to the south into Persian territory.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali, the famous translator of the meaning of the Quran, discusses some opinions on Dhul Qarnayn (Zul-Qarnain) in Appendix VII at the end of Sura 'Kahf', the 'Cave". The famous historian Ibn Kathir mentions that Dhul-Qarnayn was a pious king, who lived during the time of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham, pbuh) and he performed the Tawaaf around the Ka'bah with Prophet Ibrahim (pbuh) when he built it. See 'Muslim Minorities' site for a Map showing **Derbend**.]

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Proof of Authenticity: An Aproach

It must be stressed here that the Quran is accurate about many, many things, but accuracy does not necessarily mean that a book is a divine revelation. In fact, accuracy is only one of the criteria for divine revelations. For instance, the telephone book is accurate, but that does not mean that it is divinely revealed. The real problem lies in that one must establish some proof of the source the Quran's information. The emphasis is in the other direction, in that the burden of proof is on the reader. One cannot simply deny the Quran's authenticity without sufficient proof. If, indeed, one finds a mistake, then he has the right to disqualify it. This is exactly what the Quran encourages.

Once a man came up to me after a lecture I delivered in South Africa. He was very angry about what I had said, and so he claimed, "I am going to go home tonight and find a mistake in the Quran." Of course, I said, "Congratulations. That is the most intelligent thing that you have said." Certainly, this is the approach Muslims need to take with those who doubt the Quran's authenticity, because the Quran itself offers the same challenge. And inevitably, after accepting it's challenge and discovering that it is true, these people will come to believe it because they could not disqualify it. In essence, the Quran earns their respect because they themselves have had to verify its authenticity.

An essential fact that cannot be reiterated enough concerning the authenticity of the Quran is that one's inability to explain a phenomenon himself does not require his acceptance of the phenomenon's existence or another person's explanation of it. Specifically, just because one cannot explain something does not mean that one has to accept someone else's explanation. However, the person's refusal of other explanations reverts the burden of proof back on himself to find a feasible answer. This general theory applies to numerous concepts in life, but fits most wonderfully with the Quranic challenge, for it creates a difficulty for one who says, "I do not believe it." At the onset of refusal one immediately has an obligation to find an explanation himself if he feels others' answers are inadequate.

In fact, in one particular Quranic verse which I have always seen mistranslated into English,

Allah mentions a man who heard the truth explained to him. It states that he was derelict in his duty because after he heard the information, he left without checking the verity of what he had heard. In other words, one is guilty if he hears something and does not research it and check to see whether it is true. One is supposed to process all information and decide what is garbage to be thrown out and what is worthwhile information to be kept and benefitted from immediately or even at a later date.

One cannot just let it rattle around in his head. It must be put in the proper categories and approached from that point of view. For example, if the information is still speculatory, then one must discern whether it's closer to being true or false. But if all the facts have been presented, then one must decide absolutely between these two options. And even if one is not positive about the authenticity of the information, he is still required to process all the information and make the admission that he just does not know for sure. Although this last point appears to be futile, in actuality, it is beneficial to the arrival at a positive conclusion at a later time in that it forces the person to at least recognize, research and review the facts.

This familiarity with the information will give the person "the edge" when future discoveries are made and additional information is presented. The important thing is that one deals with the facts and does not simply discard them out of empathy and disinterest.

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Exhausting the Alternatives

The real certainty about the truthfulness of the Quran is evident in the confidence which is prevalent throughout it; and this confidence comes from a different approach - "*Exhausting the alternatives*." In essence, the Quran states, "This book is a divine revelation; if you do not believe that, then what is it?" In other words, the reader is challenged to come up with some other explanation. Here is a book made of paper and ink. Where did it come from? It says it is a divine revelation; if it is not, then what is its source? The interesting fact is that no one has yet come up with an explanation that works. In fact, all alternatives have bee exhausted. As has been well established by non-Muslims, these alternatives basically are reduced to two mutually exclusive schools of thought, insisting on one or the other.

On one hand, there exists a large group of people who have researched the Quran for hundreds of years and who claim, "One thing we know for sure - that man, Muhammad (s), thought he was a prophet. He was crazy!" They are convinced that Muhammad (s) was fooled somehow. Then on the other hand, there is a group which alleges, "Because of this evidence, one thing we know for sure is that that man, Muhammad (s) was a liar!" Ironically, these two groups never seem to get together without contradicting.

In fact, many references to Islam usually claim both theories. They start out by stating that Muhammad (s) was crazy and then end by saying he was a liar. They never seem to realize that he could not have been both! For example, if one is deluded and really thinks that he is a prophet, then he does not sit up late at night planning, "How will I fool the people tomorrow so

that they think I am a prophet?" He truly believes that he is a prophet, and he trusts that the answer will be given to him by revelation.

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The Critic's Trail

As a matter of fact, a great deal of the Quran came in answer to questions. Someone would ask Muhammad (s) a question, and the revelation would come with the answer to it. Certainly, if one is crazy and believes that an angel put words in his ear, then when someone asks him a question, he thinks that the angel will give him the answer. Because he is crazy, he really thinks that. He does not tell someone to wait a short while and then run to his friends and ask them, "Does anyone know the answer?" This type of behavior is characteristic of one who does not believe that he is a prophet. What the non-Muslims refuse to accept is that you cannot have it both ways. One can be deluded, or he can be a liar. He can br either one or neither one, but he certainly cannot be both! The emphasis is on the fact that they are unquestionably mutually exclusive personality traits.

The following scenario is a good example of the kind of circle that non-Muslims go around in constantly. If you ask one of them, "What is the origin of the Quran?" He tells you that it originated from the mind of a man who was crazy. Then you ask him, "If it came from his head, then where did he get the information contained in it? Certainly the Quran mentions many things with which the Arabs were not familiar." So in order to explain the fact which you bring him, he changes his position and says, "Well, maybe he was not crazy. Maybe some foreigner brought him the information. So he lied and told people that he was a prophet." At this point then you have to ask him, "If Muhammad was a liar, then where did he get his confidence? Why did he behave as though he really thought he was a prophet?" Finally backed into a corner, like a cat he quickly lashes out with the first response that comes to his mind. Forgetting that he has already exhausted that possibility, he claims, "Well, maybe he wasn't a liar. He was probably crazy and really thought that he was a prophet." And thus he begins the futile cycle again.

As has already been mentioned, there is much information contained in the Quran whose source cannot be attributed to anyone other than Allah. For example, who told Muhammad (s) about the wall of *Dhul-Qarnayn* - a place hundreds of miles to the north? Who told him about embryology? When people assemble facts such as these, if they are not willing to attribute their existence to a divine source, they automatically resort to the assumption someone brought Muhammad (s) the information and that he used it to fool the people. However, this theory can easily be disproved with one simple question: "If Muhammad (s) was a liar, where did he get his confidence? Why did he tell some people out right to their face what others could never say?" Such confidence depends completely upon being convinced that one has a true divine revelation.

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A Revelation - Abu Lahab

Prophet Muhammad (s) had an uncle by the name of Abu Lahab. This man hated Islam to such an extent that he used to follow the Prophet around in order to discredit him. If Abu Lahab saw the Prophet (s) speaking to a stranger, he would wait until they parted and the would go to the stranger and ask him, "What did he tell you? Did he say, 'Black'? Well, it's white. Did he say 'morning'? Well, it's night." He faithfully said the exact opposite of whatever he heard Muhammad (s) and the Muslims say. However, about ten years before Abu Lahab died, a little chapter in the Quran (Surah al-Lahab, 111) was revealed about him. It distinctly stated that he would go to the fire (i.e., Hell). In other words, it affirmed that he would never become a Muslim and would therefore be condemned forever. For ten years all Abu Lahab had to do was say, "I heard that it has been revealed to Muhammad that I will never change - that I will never become a Muslim and will enter the Hellfire. Well, I want to become Muslim now. How do you like that? What do you think of your divine revelation now?" But he never did that. And yet, that is exactly the kind of behavior one would have expected from him since he always sought to contradict Islam.

In essence, Muhammad (s) said, "You hate me and you want to finish me? Here, say these words, and I am finished. Come on, say them!" But Abu Lahab never said them. Ten years! And in all that time he never accepted Islam or even became sympathetic to the Islamic cause.

How could Muhammad (s) possibly have known for sure that Abu Lahab would fulfil the Quranic revelation if he (i.e., Muhammad) was not truly the messenger of Allah? How could he possibly have been so confident as to give someone 10 years to discredit his claim of prophethood? The only answer is that he was Allah's messenger; for in order to put forth such a risky challenge, one has to be entirely convinced that he has a divine revelation.

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The Flight

Another example of the confidence which Muhammad (s) had in his own prophethood and consequently in the divine protection of himself and his message is when he left Makkah and hid in a cave with **Abu Bakr (ra)** during their **emigration** to Madeenah. The two clearly saw people coming to kill them, and Abu Bakr was afraid. Certainly, if Muhammad (s) was a liar, a forger and one who was trying to fool the people into believing that he was a prophet, one would have expected him to say in such a circumstance to his friend, "Hey, Abu Bakr, see if you can find a back way out of this cave." Or "Squat down in that corner over there and keep quiet." Yet, in fact, what he said to Abu Bakr clearly illustrated his confidence. He told him, "Relax! Allah is with us, and Allah will save us!" Now, if one knows that he is fooling the people, where does one get this kind of attitude? In fact, such a frame of mind is not characteristic of a liar or a forger at all.

So, as has been previously mentioned, the non-Muslims go around and around in a circle, searching for a way out - some way to explain the findings in the Quran without attributing them to their proper source. On one hand, they tell you on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, "The man was a liar," and on the other hand, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday they tell you, "He was crazy." What they refuse to accept is that one cannot have it both ways; yet they need both theories, both excuses to explain the information in the Quran.

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An Encounter with a Minister

About seven years ago, I had a minister over to my home. In the particular room which we were sitting there was a Quran on the table, face down, and so the minister was not aware of which book it was. In the midst of a discussion, I pointed to the Quran and said, "I have confidence in that book." Looking at the Quran but not knowing which book it was, he replied, "Well, I tell you, if that book is not the Bible, it was written by a man!" In response to his statement, I said, "Let me tell you something about what is in that book." And in just three to four minutes, I related to him a few things contained in the Quran. After just those three or four minutes, he completely changed his position and declared, "You are right. *A man did not write that book*. The Devil wrote it!" Indeed, possessing such an attitude is very unfortunate - for many reasons. For one thing, it is a very quick and cheap excuse. It is an instant exit out of an uncomfortable situation.

As a matter of fact, there is a famous story in the Bible that mentions how one day some of the Jews were witnesses when **Jesus (pbuh)** raised a man from the dead. The man had been dead for four days, and when Jesus arrived, he simply said, "Get up!" and the man arose and walked away. At such a sight, some of the Jews who were watching said disbelievingly, "This is the Devil. The Devil helped him!" Now this story is rehearsed very often in churches all over the world, and people cry big tears over it, saying, "Oh, if I had been there, I would not have been as stupid as the Jews!" Yet, ironically, these people do exactly what the Jews did when in just three minutes you show them only a small part of the Quran and all they can say is, "Oh, the Devil did it. The devil wrote that book!" Because they are truly backed into a corner and have no other viable answer, they resort to the quickest and cheapest excuse available. [**Jesus ('Isa) and other Prophets of Allah**].

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The Source of the Quran

Another example of people's use of this weak stance can be found in the Makkans' explanation of the source of Muhammad's message. They used to say, "The devils bring Muhammad that Quran!" But just as with every suggestion made, the Quran gives the answer.

One verse (Surah Al-Qalam 68: 51-52) in particular states:

> **"And they say, 'Surely he is possessed [by jinn],' but it [i.e., the Quran] is not except a reminder to the worlds."**

Thus it gives an argument in reply to such a theory. In fact, there are many arguments in the Quran in reply to the suggestion that devils brought Muhammad (s) his message. For example, in the 26th chapter Allah (SWT) clearly affirms:

> **"No evil ones have brought it [i.e., this revelation] down. It would neither be fitting for them, nor would they be able. Indeed they have been removed far from hearing." (Surah ash-Shu'ara 26:210-212)**

And in another place (Surah an-Nahl 16:98) in the Quran, Allah (SWT) instructs us:

> **"So when you recite the Quran seek refuge in Allah from Shaytan, the rejected."**

Now is this how Satan writes a book? He tells one, "Before you read my book, ask God to save you from me?" This is very, very tricky. Indeed, a man could write something like this, but would Satan do this? Many people clearly illustrate that they cannot come to one conclusion on this subject. On one hand, they claim that Satan would not do such a thing and that even if he could, God would not allow him to; yet, on the other hand, they also believe that Satan is only that much less than God. In essence they allege that the Devil can probably do whatever God can do. And as a result, when they look at the Quran, even as surprised as they are as to how amazing it is, they still insist, "The Devil did this!"

Thanks be to Allah (SWT), Muslims do not have that attitude. Although Satan may have some abilities, they are a long way separated from the abilities of Allah. And no Muslim is a Muslim unless he believes that. It is common knowledge even among non-Muslims that the Devil can easily make mistakes, and it would be expected that he would contradict himself if and when he wrote a book. For indeed, the Quran states (Surah an-Nisa 4:82):

> **"Do they not consider the Quran? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy."**

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Mythomania

Mythomania

In conjunction with the excuses that non-Muslims advance in futile attempts to justify unexplainable verses in the Quran, there is another attack often rendered which seems to be a combination of the theories that Muhammad (s) was crazy and a liar. Basically, these people propose that Muhammad was insane, and as a result of his delusion, he lied to and misled people. There is a name for this in psychology. It is referred to as *mythomania*. It means simply that one tells lies and then believes them. This is what the non-Muslims say Muhammad (s) suffered from. But the only problem with this proposal is that one suffering from *mythomania* absolutely cannot deal with any facts, and yet the whole Quran is based entirely upon facts. Everything contained in it can be researched and established as true. Since facts are such a problem for a *mythomaniac*, when a psychologist tries to treat one suffering from that condition, he continually confronts him with facts.

For example, if one is mentally ill and claims, "I am the king of England," a psychologist does not say to him "No you aren't. You are crazy!" He just does not do that. Rather, he confronts him with facts and says, "O.K., you say you are the king of England. So tell me where the queen is today. And where is your prime minister? And where are your guards?" Now, when the man has trouble trying to deal with these questions, he tries to make excuses, saying "Uh... the queen... she has gone to her mother's. Uh... the prime minister... well he died." And eventually he is cured because he cannot deal with the facts. If the psychologist continues confronting him with enough facts, finally he faces the reality and says, "I guess I am not the king of England."

The Quran approaches everyone who reads it in very much the same way a psychologist treats his *mythomania* patient. There is a verse in the Quran (Surah Yunus 10:57) which states:

> **"O mankind, there has come to you an admonition [i.e., the Quran] from your Lord and a healing for what is in the hearts - and guidance and mercy for the believers."**

At first glance, this statement appears vague, but the meaning of this verse is clear when one views it in light of the aforementioned example. Basically, one is healed of his delusions by reading the Quran. In essence, it is therapy. It literally cures deluded people by confronting them with facts. A prevalent attitude throughout the Quran is one which says, "O mankind, you say such and such about this; but what about such and such? How can you say *this* when you know *that*?" And so forth. It forces one to consider what is relevant and what matters while simultaneously healing one of the delusions that facts presented to mankind by Allah can easily be explained away with flimsy theories and excuses.

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New Catholic Encyclopedia

It is this very sort of thing - confronting people with facts - that had captured the attention of many non-Muslims. In fact, there exists a very interesting reference concerning this subject in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. In an article under the subject of the Quran, the Catholic Church states:

> "Over the centuries, many theories have been offered as to the origin of the Quran... Today no sensible man accepts any of these theories!!"

Now here is the age-old Catholic Church, which has been around for so many centuries, denying these futile attempts to explain away the Quran.

Indeed, the Quran is a problem for the Catholic Church. It states that it is revelation, so they study it. Certainly, they would love to find proof that it is not, but they cannot. They cannot find a viable explanation. But at least they are honest in their research and do not accept the first unsubstantiated interpretation which comes along. The Church states that in fourteen centuries it has not yet been presented a sensible explanation. At least it admits that the Quran is not an easy subject to dismiss. Certainly, other people are much less honest. They quickly say, "Oh, the Quran came from here. The Quran came from there." And they do not even examine the credibility of what they are stating most of the time.

Of course, such a statement by the Catholic Church leaves the everyday Christian in some difficulty. It just may be that he has his own ideas as to the origin of the Quran, but as a single member of the Church, he cannot really act upon his own theory. Such an action would be contrary to the obedience, allegiance and loyalty which the Church demands. By virtue of his membership, he must accept what the Catholic Church declares without question and establish its teachings as part of his everyday routine. So, in essence, if the Catholic Church as a whole is saying, "Do not listen to these unconfirmed reports about the Quran," then what can be said about the Islamic point of view? If even non-Muslims are admitting that there is something to the Quran - something that has to be acknowledged - then why are people so stubborn and defensive and hostile when Muslims advance the very same theory? This is certainly something for those with a mind to contemplate - something to ponder for those of understanding!

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Testimony of an Intellectual

Recently, the leading intellectual in the Catholic Church - a man by the name of **Hans** - studied the Quran and gave his opinion of what he had read. This man has been around for some time, and he is highly respected in the Catholic Church, and after careful scrutiny, he reported his findings, concluding, "God has spoken to man through the man, Muhammad." Again this is a conclusion arrived at by a non-Muslim source - the very leading intellectual of the Catholic Church himself!

the Catholic Church himself!

I do not think that the Pope agrees with him, but nonetheless, the opinion of such a noted, reputed public figure must carry some weight in defense of the Muslim position. He must be applauded for facing the reality that the Quran is not something which can be easily pushed aside and that, in fact God is the source of these words.

As is evident from the aforementioned information, all of the possibilities have been exhausted, so the chance of finding another possibility of dismissing the Quran is nonexistent.

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Burden of Proof on the Critic

If the book is not a revelation, then it is a deception; and if it is a deception, one must ask, "What is its origin? And where does it deceive us?" Indeed, the true answers to these questions shed light on the Quran's authenticity and silence the bitter unsubstantiated claims of the unbelievers.

Certainly, if people are going to insist that the Quran is a deception, then they must bring forth evidence to support such a claim. The burden of proof is on them, not us! One is never supposed to advance a theory without sufficient corroborating facts; so I say to them, "Show me one deception! Show me where the Quran deceives me! Show me, otherwise don't say that it is a deception!"

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Origin of the Universe and Life

An interesting characteristic of the Quran is how it deals with *surprising phenomena* which relate not only to the past but to modern times as well. *In essence, the Quran is not and old problem. It is still a problem even today - a problem to the non-Muslims that is.* For everyday, every week, every year brings more and more evidence that the Quran is a force to be contended with - that its authenticity is no longer to be challenged! For example, one verse in the Quran (Surah al-Anbiya 21:30) reads:

> **"Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then We clove them asunder, and made from water every living thing? Will they not then believe?"**

Ironically, this very information is exactly what they awarded the 1973 Noble Prize for - to a couple of unbelievers.

couple of unbelievers.

The Quran reveals the origin of the universe - how it began from one piece - and mankind continues to verify this revelation, even up to now. Additionally, the fact that **all life originated from water** would not have been an easy thing to convince people of fourteen centuries ago. Indeed, if 1400 years ago you had stood in the desert and told someone, "All of this, you see (pointing to yourself), is made up of mostly water," no one would have believed you. Proof of that was not available until the invention of the microscope. They had to wait to find out that *cytoplasm*, the basic substance of the cell, is made-up of 80% water. Nonetheless, the evidence did come, and once again the Quran stood the test of time.

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More on Falsification Test

In reference to the falsification tests mentioned earlier, it is interesting to note that they, too, relate to *both the past and the present*. Some of them were used as illustrations of Allah's omnipotence and knowledge, while others continue to stand as challenges to the present day. An example of the former is the statement made in the Quran about Abu Lahab. It clearly illustrates that Allah, the Knower of the Unseen, knew that Abu Lahab would never change his ways and accept Islam. Thus Allah dictated that he would be condemned to the Hellfire forever. Such a chapter was both an illustration of Allah's divine wisdom and a warning to those who were like **Abu Lahab**.

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People of the Book

An interesting example of the latter type of falsification tests contained in the Quran is the verse which mentions the **relationship between the Muslims and the Jews**. The verse is careful not to narrow its scope to the relationship between individual members of each religion, but rather, it summarizes the relationship between the two groups of people as a whole. In essence, the Quran states that the Christians will always treat the Muslims better than the Jews will treat the Muslims. Indeed, the full impact of such a statement can only be felt after careful consideration of the real meaning of such a verse. It is true that many Christians and many Jews have become Muslims, but as a whole, the Jewish community is to be viewed as an avid enemy of Islam. Additionally, very few people realize what such an open declaration in the Quran invites. In essence, it is an easy chance for the Jews to prove that the Quran is false - that it is not a divine revelation. All they have to do is organize themselves, treat the Muslims nicely for a few years and then say, "Now what does your holy book say about who are your best friends in the world - the Jews or the Christians? Look what we Jews have done for you!" That is all they have to do to disprove the Quran's authenticity, yet they have not done it in 1400 years. But, as always, the offer still stands open!

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A Mathematical Approach

All of the examples so far given concerning the various angles from which one can approach the Quran have undoubtedly been subjective in nature; however, there does exist another angle, among others, which is **objective** and whose basis is *mathematical*.

It is surprising how authentic the Quran becomes when one assembles what might be referred to as a list of good guesses. Mathematically, it can be explained using guessing and prediction examples. For instance, if a person has two choices (i.e., one is right, and one is wrong), and he closes his eyes and makes a choice, then half of the time (i.e., one time out of two) he will be right. Basically, he has a one in two chance, for he could pick the wrong choice, or he could pick the right choice.

Now if the same person has two situations like that (i.e., he could be right or wrong about situation number one, and he could be right or wrong about situation number two), and he closes his eyes and guesses, then he will only be right one-fourth of the time (i.e., one time out of four). He now has a one in four chance because now there are three ways for him to be wrong and only one way for him to be right. In simple terms, he could make the wrong choice in situation number one and then make the wrong choice in situation number two; or he could make the wrong choice in situation number one and then make the right choice in situation number two; or he could make the right choice in situation number one and then make the wrong choice in situation number two; or he could make the right choice in situation number one and then make the right choice in situation number two.

Of course, the (only instance in which he could be totally right is the last scenario where he could guess correctly in both situations. The odds of his guessing completely correctly have become greater because the number of situations for him to guess in have increased; and the mathematical equation representing such a scenario is ½ x ½ (i.e., one time out of two for the first situation multiplied by one time out of two for the second situation).

Continuing on with the example, if the same person now has three situations in which to make blind guesses, then he will only be right one-eighth of the time (i.e., one time out of eight or ½ x ½ x ½). Again, the odds of choosing the correct choice in all three situations have decreased his chances of being completely correct to only one time in eight. It must be understood that as the number of situations increase, the chances of being right decrease, for the two phenomena are inversely proportional.

Now applying this example to the situations in the Quran, if one draws up a list of all of the subjects about which the Quran has made correct statements, it becomes very clear that it is highly unlikely that they were all just correct blind guesses. Indeed, the subjects discussed in the Quran are numerous [some of them are listed in the **Quran and Scientific Knowledge**], and thus the odds of someone just making lucky guesses about all of them become practically nil. If there are a million ways for the Quran to be wrong, yet each time it is right, then it is unlikely

there are a million ways for the Quran to be wrong, yet each time it is right, then it is unlikely that someone was guessing.

The following **three examples** of subjects about which the Quran has made correct statements collectively illustrate how the Quran continues to beat the odds.

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The Female Bee

In the 16th chapter (Surah an-Nahl 16:68-69) the Quran mentions that the *female bee* leaves its home to gather food. Now, a person might guess on that, saying, "The bee that you see flying around - it could be male, or it could be female. I think I will guess female." Certainly, he has a one in two chance of being right. So it happens that the Quran is right. But it also happens that that was not what most people believed at the time when the Quran was revealed. Can you tell the difference between a male and a female bee? Well, it takes a specialist to do that, but it has been discovered that the male bee never leaves his home to gather food. However, in Shakespeare's play, *Henry the Fourth*, some of the characters discuss bees and mention that the bees are soldiers and have a king. That is what people thought in Shakespeare's time - that the bees that one sees flying around are male bees and that they go home and answer to a king. However, that is not true at all. The fact is that they are females, and they answer to a queen. Yet it took modern scientific investigations in the last 300 years to discover that this is the case.

So, back to the list of good guesses, concerning the topic of bees, the Quran had a 50/50 chance of being right, and the odds were one in two.

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The Sun

In addition to the subject of bees, the Quran also discusses the **sun** and the manner in which it travels through space. Again, a person can guess on that subject. When the sun moves through space, there are two options: it can travel just as a stone would travel if one threw it, or it can move of its own accord. The Quran states the latter - that it moves as a result of its own motion (Surah al-Anbiya 21:33). To do such, the Quran uses a form of the word *sabaha* to describe the sun's movement through space. In order to properly provide the reader with a comprehensive understanding of the implications of this Arabic verb, the following example is given.

If a man is in water and the verb *sabaha* is applied in reference to his movement, it can be understood that he is swimming, moving of his own accord and not as a result of a direct force applied to him. Thus when this verb is used in reference to the sun's movement through space, it in no way implies that the sun is flying uncontrollably through space as a result of being

It in no way implies that the sun is flying uncontrollably through space as a result of being hurled or the like. It simply means that the sun is turning and rotating as it travels. Now, this is what the Quran affirms, but was it an easy thing to discover? Can any common man tell that the sun is turning? Only in modern times was the equipment made available to project the image of the sun onto a tabletop so that one could look at it without being blinded. And through this process it was discovered that not only are there spots on the sun but that these spots move once every 25 days. This movement is referred to as the rotation of the sun around its axis and conclusively proves that, as the Quran stated 1400 years ago, the sun does, indeed, turn as it travels through space.

And returning once again to the subject of good guesses, the odds of guessing correctly about both subjects - the sex of bees and the movement of the sun - are one in four!

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Time Zones

Seeing as back fourteen centuries ago people probably did not understand much about *time zones*, the Quran's statements about this subject are considerably surprising. The concept that one family is having breakfast as the sun comes up while another family is enjoying the brisk night air is truly something to be marveled at, even in modern time. Indeed, fourteen centuries ago, a man could not travel more than thirty miles in one day, and thus it took him literally months to travel from India to Morocco, for example. And probably, when he was having supper in Morocco, he thought to himself, "Back home in India they are having supper right now." This is because he did not realize that, in the process of traveling, he moved across a time zone. Yet, because it is the words of Allah, the All-Knowing, the Quran recognizes and acknowledges such a phenomenon.

In an interesting verse it states that when history comes to an end and the Day of Judgement arrives, it will all occur in an instant; and this very instant will catch some people in the daytime and some people at night. This clearly illustrates Allah's divine wisdom and His previous knowledge of the existence of time zones, even though such a discovery was non-existent back fourteen centuries ago. Certainly, this phenomenon is not something which is obvious to one's eyes or a result of one's experience, and this fact, in itself, suffices as proof of the Quran's authenticity.

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Conclusions

Returning one final time to the subject of good guesses for the purpose of the present example, the odds that someone guessed correctly about all three of the aforementioned subjects - the sex of bees, the movement of the sun and the existence of time zones - are one in eight!

Certainly, one could continue on and on with this example, drawing up longer and longer list

Certainly, one could continue on and on with this example, drawing up longer and longer list of good guesses; and of course, the odds would become higher and higher with each increase of subjects about which one could guess. But what no one can deny is the following: the odds that Muhammad (s), an illiterate, guessed correctly about thousands and thousands of subjects, never once making a mistake, are so high that any theory of his authorship of the Quran must be completely dismissed - even by the most hostile enemies of Islam!

Indeed, the Quran expects this kind of challenge. Undoubtedly, if one said to someone upon entering a foreign land, "I know your father. I have met him," probably the man from that land would doubt the newcomer's word, saying, "You have just come here. How could you know my father?" As a result, he would question him, "Tell me, is my father tall, short, dark, fair? What is he like?" Of course, if the visitor continued answering all of the questions correctly, the skeptic would have no choice but to say, "I guess you do know my father. I don't know *how* you know him, but I guess you do!"

The situation is the same with the Quran. It states that it originates from the One who created everything. So everyone has the right to say, "Convince me! If the author of this book really originated life and everything in the heavens and on the earth, then He should know about this, about that, and so on." And inevitably, after researching the Quran, everyone will discover the same truths. Additionally, we all know something for sure: we do not all have to be experts to verify what the Quran affirms. One's *iman* (faith) grows as one continues to check and confirm the truths contained in the Quran. And one is supposed to do so all of his life.

May God (Allah) guide everyone close to the truth.

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Addendum 1

An engineer at the University of Toronto who was interested in psychology and who had read something on it, conducted research and wrote a thesis on **Efficiency of Group Discussions**. The purpose of his research was to find out how much people accomplish when they get together to talk in groups of two, three, ten, etc. The graph of his findings goes up and down at places, but it reaches the highest point at the variable of two. The findings: people accomplish most when they talk in groups of two. Of course, this discovery was entirely beyond his expectations, but it is very old advice given in the Quran (Surah Saba 34:46):

> **"Say, 'I exhort you to one thing - that you stand for Allah, [assessing the truth] by twos and singly, and then reflect...'"**

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Addendum 2: 'Iram

Additionally, the 89th chapter of the Quran (Surah al-Fajr 89:7) mentions a certain city by the name of **'Iram** (a city of pillars), which was not known in ancient history and which was non-existent as far as historians were concerned. However, the December 1978 edition of *National Geographic* introduced interesting information which mentioned that in 1973, the city of Elba was excavated in Syria. The city was discovered to be 43 centuries old, but that is not the most amazing part. Researchers found in the library of Elba a record of all of the cities with which Elba had done business. Believe it or not, there on the list was the name of the city of 'Iram. The people of Elba had done business with the people of 'Iram!

In conclusion I ask you to consider with care the following (Surah 29:50-51):

> **"And they say, 'Why are not signs sent down to him from his Lord?' Say, 'Indeed, the signs are with Allah, and I am but a clear warner.' But it is sufficient for them that We have sent down to you the Book [i.e., Quran] which is rehearsed to them? Verily, in that is mercy and a reminder to people who believe."**

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Allah: Allah is the proper name in Arabic for The One and Only God, The Creator and Sustainer of the universe. It is used by the Arab Christians and Jews for the God (Eloh-im in Hebrew; 'Allaha' in Aramaic, the mother tongue of Jesus, pbuh). The word **Allah** does not have a plural or gender. Allah does not have any associate or partner, and He does not beget nor was He begotten. SWT is an abbreviation of Arabic words that mean 'Glory Be To Him.'
s or pbuh: Peace Be Upon Him. This expression is used for all **Prophets of Allah**.
ra: RadiAllahu Anhu (May Allah be pleased with him).

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